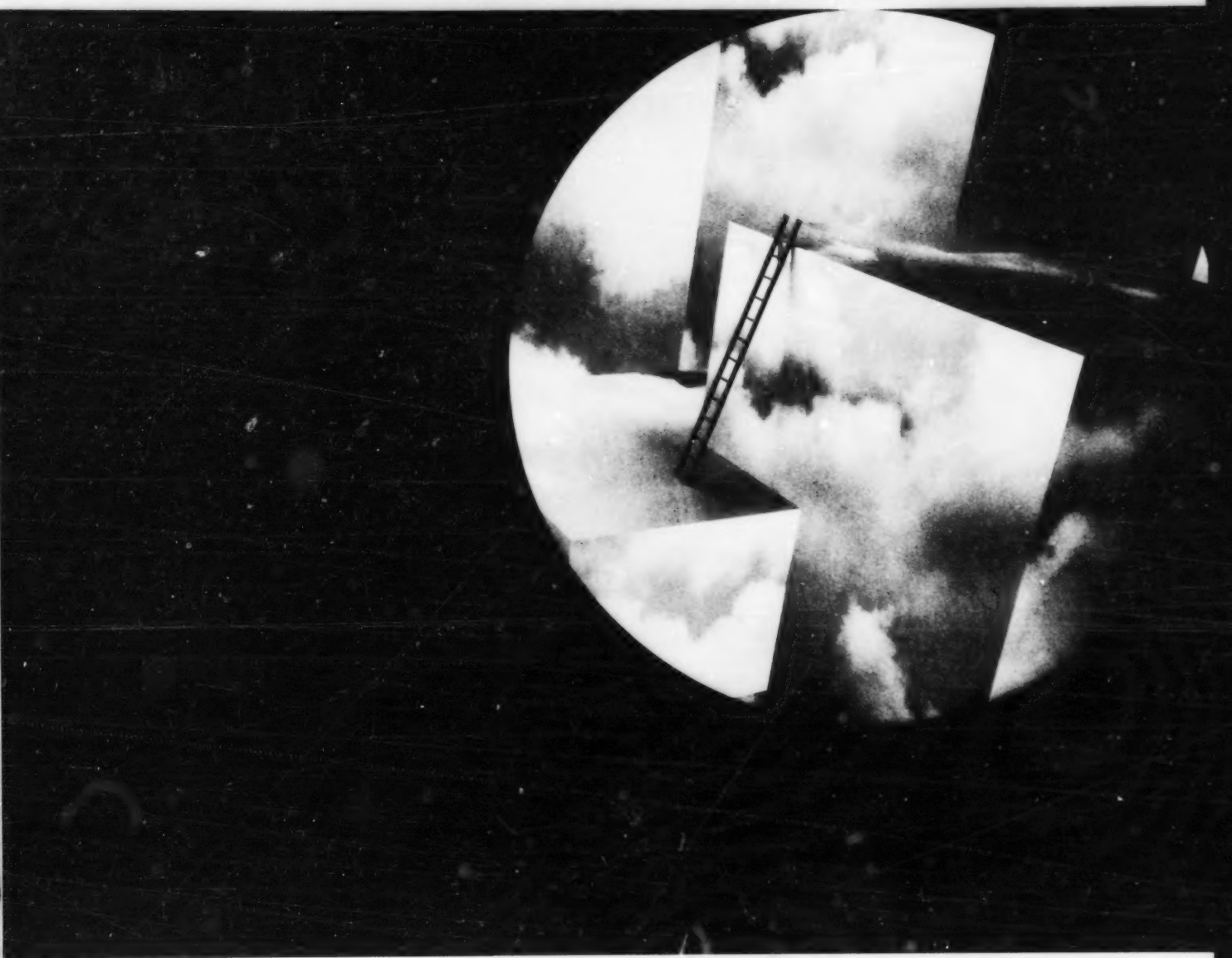
WCB SASKATCHEWAN WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Planning Report to 2001 Mid Year Review



A PRINCIPLED FOUNDATION

The WCB introduced formal planning in 1997. The first task was considering and confirming the Meredith Principles as the foundation that would anchor corporate planning.

Our decision was based on our conviction that the Meredith Principles are as valid and meaningful to the future of Saskatchewan's compensation system, as they have been to its past.

Taken together, the Meredith Principles embed our compensation system with the balance of interests, impartiality in decision making, guarantee of benefits, secure funding, and independence that it needs to deliver its mandate.

Managing by the Meredith Principles has served Saskatchewan injured workers and employers well. It has secured and improved benefits to injured workers, while producing financial stability for the WCB. And it has provided for rate making practices that result in rate stability while ensuring that today's employers honour their responsibility for today's costs.

For these reasons, corporate planning will continue to fix the Meredith Principles as the foundation that guides decisions on the future of the WCB.

1997 TO 2002: VALUE TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The WCB's first planning cycle set out nine strategic priorities that, once accomplished, would improve our operations and deliver greater service and value to our stakeholders – Saskatchewan's injured workers and employers.

The nine intents were interrelated, mutually supportive and adaptable as the environment we operate in experienced change. Through our annual reports and at stakeholder events, we have reported on our progress towards these intents. Here is a summary of significant achievements:

- A governance policy that completes the Board's shift from an administrative to a policy board, by setting out roles, responsibilities, and authorities for the Chairman, Board Members, and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Introduction of the Balanced Scorecard as a method of reporting the WCB's performance. Scorecard measures track our performance against targets in five areas: individual and team effectiveness, process effectiveness, customer service, financial integrity, and innovative leadership.
- A Business Process Simplification project that is redesigning our claims management and revenue and employer account processes to increase their value to our customers.
- Customer service enhancements for both injured workers and employers, such as our Hireline and Bridging programs.
- A broadened emphasis in vocational services on helping injured workers to rehabilitate all aspects of their life that are impacted by injury.
- An expanded role in injury prevention and safety, based on joint initiatives with Occupational Health & Safety Division of Saskatchewan Labour, industry safety associations, and other safety agencies.
- Introduction of management training aimed at supporting leadership expectations throughout our organization.
- Attention to our corporate culture, with the intention of aligning individual behaviour with corporate values and goals.

2001 ACTIVITIES

In September of last year, the WCB Board and executive set six priorities for the 2001 business year that would continue to build on our planning achievements. At midyear, we have made significant strides on each.

- Two priorities are targetted at improving services to injured workers. The first developed a customer centered, team based case management process that is being piloted on claims coming out of the Moose Jaw region. The second called for enhancements to vocational services, and in particular to the development of policies and procedures that address the impact an injury can have on quality of life.

101-06742/

- Improvements to underwriting services are prioritized, with emphasis on piloting actual wage reporting and attention to the potential of e-business transactions. While the wage reporting pilot did not attract as many employers as anticipated, e-business transactions now available through our web site have been extremely well received.

- Looking within our organization, we prioritized ongoing attention to creating a customer-centered corporate culture. Cultural audits conducted each fall since 1998 have tracked improvements to our corporate culture. We anticipate additional progress when the audit is conducted this year.

- A Joint Union - Management Partnership, which held its first meeting in September of 1999, has matured as the means by which WCB's management and union identify and solve organizational issues.

- The means by which we collect data, and then assemble, analyze and report on it, is a high priority for us. This year will see the introduction of a management information system to support WCB decision- and policy-making.

- The WCB has a considerable stake in safe workplaces and in injury prevention. A priority was set to implement a risk reduction program, as a joint initiative with Occupational Health and Safety Division of Saskatchewan Labour, under the program name of WorkSafe Saskatchewan. We anticipate this program will be officially launched by the end of the year.

This year also sees the pilot of an expansion of claims management services in Saskatoon. The pilot is based on a team approach that will bring together specialists in case management, vocational services, and health care services, to manage files in the north. The pilot team should be in place by November.

A TIME OF TRANSITION

The years 1997 to 2002 are a time of transition for the WCB as we move from an organization that formerly did not practice corporate planning, to one where planning is a management hallmark.

The WCB has learned a great deal from its planning experience. We have learned that our employees are committed to providing quality service to our customers, and that they are a creative source of ideas on service improvement. Nearly all of the achievements of the past four years were first framed by our employees. They continue to be a source of innovation.

Another lesson was the expectation among those interested in the compensation system for producing results through planning. These expectations remind us that we are, first and foremost, guardians of an historic accord, and that we must practice discipline and rigor in our planning.

We learned as well that corporate planning must be a transparent process and that it is most successful when it is a participative process. The more input and feedback we receive from those with an interest in the compensation system, the better our planning practices become.

In a report commissioned by Joanne Crofford, former Minister of Labour, Jim Dorsey has provided thoughtful recommendations on how corporate planning practices might be strengthened. Mr. Dorsey's comments will be helpful as we move into the WCB's next planning cycle.

2002 FORWARD
SHARPEN THE FOCUS: SHAPE THE FUTURE

The WCB's Board Members and Chief Executive Officer already are engaged in strategy sessions for the 2002 to 2004 period.

An exacting review of the WCB's vision, mission and value statements is underway. Over the past five years, these statements have become the standards against which we judged our decisions and actions. Looking ahead, we want to continue to refine vision, mission and values as appropriate guides for the organization.

Strategic intents, or strategy statements, also are being identified for the next planning cycle. Once this work is complete, the WCB's administration will be asked to develop multi-year objectives and implementation plans through to the end of 2004.

Discussions on strategy statements are ongoing and strategy statements are not yet final. It is certain, though, that strategies for the 2002 to 2004 period will continue to focus on excellence in customer service. Strategies are being considered on customer service tied to returning injured workers to their pre-injury level of wellness, on relationships that advance the interests of injured workers and employers, and on nurturing the continuing development of a customer-centered organization.

Another feature of 2002 to 2004 strategy statements will be the inclusion of intended results, with measures that can be used to track achievement of those results.

The WCB will continue to improve transparency in planning. Once final, the 2002-2004 strategic plan, with supporting business plans, will be widely distributed to stakeholders and others interested in the continuing success of Saskatchewan's Workers' Compensation Board.

WCB SASKATCHEWAN WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

200 – 1881 Scarth Street
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4L1
Phone: 1-800-667-7590
Fax: 1-888-544-7773
Visit our website: www.wcbsask.com